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Claims relate to forming ice crystals in beverage.

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| (54) Title: A BEVERAGE | | |
| (57) Abstract | | A draught beverage (170) which may be alcoholic or non-alcoholic, for example a lager or cider in an open-topped drinking vessel or glass (172). The beverage comprises a water content and dissolved gas content. The draught beverage is dispensed from a font at a cooled temperature below the freezing point of water at ambient atmospheric pressure. The dispense temperature may be in the range of -1 °C to -12 °C. The beverage in the glass may or may not be subjected to external excitement energy, for example ultrasound, to encourage formation of nucleation sites in the beverage. Either way dissolved gas bubbles out of the beverage causing occurrence of nucleation sites at which ice (188A, 188B) from the water content forms. At least in part the ice has a slushy character. A head (174) also forms on the dispensed draught beverage and below the head the ice (188A, 188B) locates and develops downwards into the beverage. |

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A Beverage

This invention relates to a beverage, to methods of presenting or serving a beverage, to providing a visual display in a beverage, and to apparatus to supply draught beverage.

The beverage concerned comprises a water content and a dissolved gas content.

10 The beverage may be an alcoholic beverage or a non-alcoholic beverage. For example, the beverage may be a beer, a cider, a flavoured alcoholic beverage, for example an alcoholic lemonade or other alco-pop style of drink, or a so-called low alcoholic drink. The term "beer" embraces lager, ale, porter and stout and includes a beverage comprising hops flavouring, an alcohol content derived from malt and fermentation, a water content, and a dissolved gas content.

One object is to provide a cool beverage using ice therein in a way which a consumer may find more agreeable because dilution of the drink
20 cannot occur.

Another object to provide a beverage which the existence of cooling ice therein may be sustained whereby the drink may be kept cold for an extended period of time.

25 Another object is to provide a beverage in which a head thereon may be sustained.

Another object is to provide a beverage in which ice may develop
30 therein as an interesting visual display.

According to a first aspect of the invention there is provided a beverage in an open-topped vessel, said beverage comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content, and in said vessel the beverage having
5 a head of foam over ice, said ice being formed in the beverage from water of said water content.

The vessel may be any suitable vessel, for example a drinking vessel, for example a glass.

10

Preferably there is a layer of ice adjacent the head, in contact with the head. Preferably there is a projection of ice extending downwards, away from the head, and being provided in the region of the head. The projection of the ice may depend directly from the head, or from a layer of ice beneath
15 the head.

The ice is preferably made of many small crystals of ice, rather than a single solid mass. The ice is preferably slushy in character, rather than being a solid mass. There may be more than one kind of ice formation in
20 the beverage. There may be a fine, powdery ice. There may be a flaky ice, of the order of 1 or 2mm or 3mm or 4mm, or more, in their longest dimension of the flakes.

The beverage, which may be coloured as distinct from white or water clear, may have bands, or stripes, across it at different heights, the bands possibly being white layers where nucleation is taking place, and beverage-coloured layers interposed between the white layers where less nucleation is taking place. This effect may be achieved by using ultrasound on the vessel, for example a glass, of beverage. The white bands and the

interposed beverage-coloured bands may be of substantially the same thickness.

The white bands interspersed by beverage-coloured bands may exist
5 for a matter of seconds, rather than minutes, and typically exist for 1 to 10 seconds, preferably about 3 to 6 seconds. The white bands/beverage-coloured bands interspersed may exist for substantially the same time as ultrasound is applied to the vessel of beverage.

10 Nucleation means may be provided to encourage the formation of the ice crystals and/or head in the beverage when it is in a vessel. The nucleation means is preferably the administration of ultrasound, preferably to the bottom portion of a vessel of beverage, but it could be other forms of nucleation inducement. For example the vessel and/or dispense tap/nozzle
15 (or an object to be inserted into the vessel of beverage) may have a roughened surface/high surface area surface to encourage nucleation (such as a sintered surface, etched surface, or a surface of ground material, such as glass); or a rapid and suitably large pressure drop may be provided to induce nucleation; or mechanical agitation may be provided; or the beverage
20 may be arranged to have turbulent flow to promote nucleation; or an amount of liquid, possibly highly supersaturated with gas, may be introduced or injected; or gas may be otherwise introduced, or injected, or the glass may be vibrated in some way (e.g. by being exposed to sound waves, or the vessel may be vibrated in some other way); or by introducing a chemical
25 (e.g. tablet) or device which generates bubbles (for example a chemical pellet may effervesce or dissolve, releasing bubbles).

According to a second aspect of the invention there is provided a method of keeping a beverage in an open-topped vessel cool, said beverage
30 comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content, and said method

comprising forming ice in the beverage in the open-topped vessel having a cooling effect on the beverage, said ice being formed in the beverage from water of said water content.

5 According to a third aspect of the invention there is provided a method of sustaining cooling ice in a beverage in an open-topped vessel, said beverage comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content, and wherein said ice is formed in the beverage from water of said water content, said method comprising providing a head of foam on the beverage such that
10 in the vessel said ice is covered by the head which acts as head insulation above the ice against heat directed towards the ice from above the head.

According to a fourth aspect of the invention there is provided a method of sustaining a head on beverage in an open-topped vessel, said
15 beverage comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content, said method comprising providing a head on the beverage and forming ice in the beverage from water of said water content, and in said vessel said ice having a cooling effect on the head from below an upper part of the head.

20 According to a fifth aspect of the invention, there is provided an open-topped vessel of a beverage the beverage comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content and being able to form a head as the beverage is dispensed into the vessel, the vessel of beverage having a head overlying an ice formation made of many ice crystals, the ice formation having been
25 produced by ice forming in the beverage as it was dispensed or after it was dispensed into the vessel.

Preferably the vessel has a transparent or translucent wall or at least has a window of transport or translucent material.

Preferably the ice formation extends substantially the width of the mouth of the vessel, or completely across the width of the mouth. It may comprise substantially homogenous ice-crystals in a head-contacting region or layer. Alternatively, the ice crystals that contact the head may not be substantially homogeneous.

The ice formation may have a projection extending away from the head. The projection may comprise flakes of ice that are larger than the ice at the ice-head boundary.

10

The ice at the ice-head interface may have been formed before the ice flakes of the projection.

The beverage may have been subjected to ultrasound signals and may be draught beverage delivered into the vessel. Before the draft beverage is delivered into the vessel, and preferably immediately before, the beverage may be cooled to a temperature below the freezing point of water at ambient atmospheric pressure.

20

According to a sixth aspect of the invention there is provided a method of serving draught beverage in an open-topped vessel, said beverage comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content, and said method comprising cooling the beverage to a temperature below the freezing point of water at ambient atmospheric pressure, and delivering the cooled beverage into said vessel, said cooled beverage being subjected to the effect of ultrasound signals or to the effect of other ice and/or gas bubble nucleation means.

The ultrasound signals may be applied externally of said vessel, and/or the ultrasound signals may be applied internally of said vessel to the

30

cooled beverage. In the latter case an ultra-sonic emitter provided as or incorporated into a probe may be disposed in the beverage in the vessel. If desired a dispense outlet or nozzle from which the beverage is delivered into the vessel may be adapted to act as an ultra-sonic emitter to provide 5 aforesaid ultrasound signals to beverage in the vessel. Such signals may be applied to the beverage as it passes through the dispense outlet.

Ultrasound signals can be applied to beverage not only after it has been delivered into the vessel, but also whilst it is being delivered.

10

The ultrasound signals may have a frequency in the range of 20kHz to 70kHz. For example, the ultrasound signals may have a frequency of substantially 30kHz.

15

A mass of aforesaid ice may develop downwards in the beverage below the head.

20

Preferably, the vessel is chilled before the beverage is delivered thereinto. The vessel may be chilled to a temperature of substantially 4°C, or the vessel may be chilled to a temperature less than 4°C. For example, the vessel may be chilled to a temperature of substantially 0°C.

25

Prior to the delivery, and preferably just prior to the delivery, a draught beverage may be cooled to a temperature in a range of between substantially -1°C and substantially -12°C and may issue at a temperature substantially in that range into the vessel. If desired, the beverage may be cooled to a temperature between substantially -4°C and substantially -6°C. The greater the alcohol strength by volume (abv), the lower the temperature to which the alcoholic beverage may be cooled. We may aim to achieve a

dispense temperature of about -5°C for a lager (or other drink) with out 4.5 abv (or to substantially - 4°C or substantially -6°C).

Preferably, the vessel has a wall portion of sufficient transparency to
5 allow the contents of the vessel to be visible through said wall portion.
Thus the vessel may be a glass drinking vessel.

Preferably the beverage is a pale colour for example the colour of a
pale beer. If desired the beverage can be a lager, or a cider.

10

Aforesaid dissolved gas may comprise carbon dioxide and/or may comprise nitrogen. A dissolved nitrogen content in the beverage, for example an alcoholic beverage may be in the range of substantially zero parts per million (p.p.m) to substantially 100 p.p.m. For some beverages,
15 for example certain lagers, substantially 40 p.p.m. A dissolved carbon dioxide content may approach zero % by volume or be greater. Said carbon dioxide may be substantially at any of the following levels or in a range defined between any of the following levels; zero vols/vol, 0.5 vols/vol, 1 vols/vol, 1.4 or 1.5 vols/vol, 2.0 vols/vol, 2.2 or 2.4 vols/vol, 3 vols/vol, 4 vols/vols or 5 vols/vol or above.

If desired, the ultrasound signals can be accompanied by a mechanically or electrically produced audible performance and/or a visible light display. The audible performance may be tuneful or musical sound.
25 The visible light displays may comprise visible flashes of light.

If desired the beverage can be subjected to the ultrasound within an enclosure arranged to conceal the vessel from view from at least one side of said enclosure.

30

According to a seventh aspect of the invention, there is provided a beverage comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content, wherein prior to being drunk said beverage is cooled to a temperature below the freezing point of water at ambient atmospheric pressure and delivered in a vessel to be drunk exposed to ambient atmospheric pressure, and wherein in said vessel aforesaid gas bubbles out of the beverage and at least a portion of said water content becomes ice.

According to an eighth aspect of the invention, there is provided a beverage to be available on draught and comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content, wherein prior to being drunk the draught beverage is to issue, at a temperature below the freezing point of water at ambient atmospheric pressure, from an outlet into a vessel open to ambient atmospheric pressure so that aforesaid gas bubbles out of the beverage and at least a portion of said water content becomes ice.

If desired, the vessel which preferably may be a drinking vessel, can have a shape or formation to promote formation of the ice. For example, the vessel may have an internal surface to provide nucleation sites to promote formation of the ice. Said surface may have at least a surface portion which is roughened. At least a wall portion of vessel can be arranged to change colour automatically with variation in temperature. Said wall portion may comprise theremo-chromic material.

Desirably, the gas is a non-oxidising gas. This can avoid or at least slow deterioration of the beverage. The gas comprises carbon dioxide and/or nitrogen. By cooling the beverage and forming ice therein, this appears to, initially at least, reduce the rate of release of dissolved gas from the beverage, for example lager, and appears to improve the drinking sensation, taste, flavour or bite. We believe that this is a combination of

the low drinking temperature (maintained by the ice) and the greater amount of retained gas in the beverage.

The presence of the ice can provide an interesting and attractive
5 feature which can be particularly fascinating as the ice may expand at a noticeable rate throughout the beverage after the vessel is filled. To add to the interest, the ice may include therein one or more streaks or regions of one or more colours which contrast(s) with the colour of the ice and/or beverage.

10

The aforesaid ice may be, or may have, the character of slush.

According to a ninth aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of serving a draught beverage which comprises a water content and
15 a dissolved gas content, said method comprising issuing the draught beverage from an outlet into a vessel, prior to said issuing, storing or handling the beverage in a manner which impedes loss of the aforesaid dissolved gas from the beverage and cooling said beverage to a temperature below the freezing point of water at said ambient atmospheric pressure, and
20 in said vessel aforesaid gas bubbles out of the beverage and at least a portion of said water becomes ice.

According to a tenth aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of providing a visual display or effect within a vessel having at
25 least a portion of wall of some transparency, said method comprising providing a draught beverage comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content, issuing the draught beverage from an outlet into a said vessel, prior to said issuing, storing or handling the beverage in a manner which impedes loss of aforesaid dissolved gas from the beverage and cooling said
30 beverage to a temperature below the freezing point of water at said ambient

10

atmospheric pressure and a visual display or effect developing in the beverage in the vessel, said visual display or effect comprising aforesaid gas bubbling out of the beverage and formation of ice due to at least a portion of said water becomes ice.

5

Formation of ice can develop in the vessel so as to increase the amount and extent of the ice from substantially an upper level of the beverage downwards through the beverage.

10

At least a wall portion of the vessel may change colour automatically with variation in temperature. Said wall portion may comprise thermochromic material.

15

An implement can be inserted into the beverage in the vessel to encourage formation of said ice. For example, the implement may be a thermometer, or it may be a swizzle-stick.

20

Colouring material or dye can be provided to form at least one coloured streak or region in the beverage and/or ice, the colour of said material or dye being in contrast to that of the ice and/or beverage so as to be visible.

The aforesaid implement may be used to add the colouring material or dye to the beverage and/or ice.

25

In one method, the beverage may issue at substantially -4°C into the vessel and thereafter the temperature of the beverage in the vessel may rise almost immediately to at least substantially -3°C

According to an eleventh aspect of the invention, there is provided a beverage dispense apparatus comprising cooling means adapted to cool a beverage to below 0°C, a dispense tap, and beverage dispense pipework adapted to convey the beverage to the dispense tap, the arrangement being 5 such that the apparatus is adapted to dispense the beverage cooled to below the point at which ice would normally form in the beverage if the beverage were left standing at atmospheric pressure and if nucleation means were provided for the standing beverage, and in which the undispensed beverage in the apparatus does not freeze solid.

10

Preferably, the apparatus includes pump means and the beverage dispense pipework may include a portion which circulates beverage past the dispense tap when the dispense tap is closed, the fact that cooled undispensed beverage is kept flowing tends to prevent the formation of ice 15 blockages at the dispense tap.

The beverage may be kept flowing past the dispense tap (or through it when it is open) at substantially all times that the beverage is at a temperature at which ice may otherwise form at the dispense tap or, in the 20 beverage dispense pipework.

Preferably, there is a cold circulation loop in which is provided at least one cooling means and which connected to the dispense tap, beverage in the circulation loop being kept cold by the cooling means and being kept 25 circulating by pump means provided in the circulation loop. There may be a plurality of cooling means (e.g. heat exchangers) in the circulation loop. There may be a plurality of dispense taps associated with the circulation loop.

12

Beverage upstream of the circulation loop may be cooled to a temperature about that at which ice may form in the beverage under the conditions of temperature and pressure experienced by the beverage in the pipework upstream of the circulation loop.

5

According to a twelfth aspect of the invention, there is provided apparatus to supply draught beverage, comprising beverage heat exchange means, a beverage outlet for cold beverage from said heat exchange means to issue from the outlet, openable and closable valve means to control supply of beverage to said outlet, and a beverage circulation loop for beverage to circulate in said loop.

The beverage can circulate in the loop when the valve means is closed. Preferably, the loop comprises pump means to circulate said beverage.

20

A purpose of circulating the beverage is to reduce the risk of or avoid freezing beverage blocking a beverage supply path to the outlet. Said loop may include a beverage flow passage in said heat exchange means.

25

In a preferred embodiment, the apparatus can comprise a unit or dispenser mountable on a counter of a drinks' bar and comprising the heat exchange means and the outlet.

25

A beverage flow path can connect a reservoir of the draught beverage to the heat exchange means. The flow path may comprise at least a portion of the loop.

The flow path may divide into a plurality of beverage routes, and the 30 loop may comprise one or more of the routes.

Intermediate the reservoir and the first-mentioned heat exchange means. The beverage may be subject to the effect of second beverage cooling heat exchange means.

5

The reservoir may be subjected to cooling.

If desired, the second heat exchange means may act on at least a portion of the loop.

10

Coolant common to the first and second heat exchange means may circulate therethrough.

Beverage cooling heat exchange means may act on the beverage
15 intermediate said reservoir and loop.

One advantage of a specific embodiment of the invention is that it enables us to provide cool beverage using ice therein in a way which a consumer may find more agreeable because dilution of the drink cannot
20 occur. Another advantage may be that we can provide a beverage in which the existence of cooling ice therein may be sustained whereby the drink may be kept cold for an extended period of time.

A further advantage may be that we can provide beverage in which a head thereon may be sustained for a longer period of time than is achieved
25 by the same beer dispensed at, say 6°C, or at say 4°C using similar or the same dispense apparatus. Yet a further advantage of one embodiment of the invention is that it enables us to provide beer in which ice may develop therein as an interesting visual display.

30

It is extremely difficult to serve a glass of draught cider with a head of froth or foam so that the head lasts for any appreciable time. Though it is possible to create a head by dispensing the cider from a font containing a sparkler, the head quickly disappears. Because the use of a sparkler slows the delivery rate of the cider, it takes longer to deliver a measured volume than if the sparkler were not used, and because the head quickly vanishes anyway some people think use of a sparkler pointless and take it off the font - sometimes without permission.

10 Another object is to provide a method of serving draught cider containing a dissolved gas content so that a head on the delivered draught cider in a vessel, for example a drinking glass, is more stable and remains for a longer period of time than a head on cider served by hitherto known methods.

15 According to a thirteenth aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of serving draught cider in an open-topped vessel and wherein said cider comprises a water content and a dissolved gas content, said method comprising cooling the cider to a temperature below the freezing point of water at ambient atmospheric pressure, and delivering the cooled cider into said vessel, said cooled cider being subjected to the effect of ultra-sound signals.

20 The cider may be cooled to a temperature in the range of substantially on -1°C to substantially -12°C. For example, the cider may be cooled to substantially -6°C. The greater the alcohol strength by volume the lower the temperature to which the cider may be cooled.

If desired, the cooled cider may issue from a dispense outlet through a sparkler. However, the cooled cider may pass through an orifice plate in a dispense outlet from which the cider issues.

5 Preferably the open-topped vessel is chilled before receiving the cider. The vessel may be chilled to substantially 4°C or may be chilled to a temperature lower than 4°C. For example, the vessel may be chilled to substantially 0°C.

10 Said ultra-sound signals may have a frequency in the range of substantially 20kHz to substantially 70kHz. For example, the ultra-sound signals may have a frequency of substantially 30kHz.

15 The ultra-sound signals can be applied externally of said vessel to said vessel.

The ultra-sound signals may be applied internally of said vessel to the cooled cider. Thus an ultra-sonic signal emitter may be disposed in the cider in the vessel for emitting ultra-sound signals into the cider in the
20 vessel.

A or the dispense outlet from which the cooled cider issues into said vessel may be adapted to act as an ultra-sonic signal emitter to provide aforesaid ultra-sound signals. Aforesaid ultra-sound signals may be applied
25 to aforesaid cider flowing through the dispense outlet.

The dissolved gas content may comprise carbon dioxide and/or nitrogen. The carbon dioxide may approach zero % by volume or be greater, and/or the nitrogen content may approach zero parts per million
30 (p.p.m.) or be greater for example, the carbon dioxide content may be

substantially 1.8% by volume and/or the nitrogen content may be substantially 18 parts per million (p.p.m.).

According to the fourteenth aspect of the invention there is provided
5 cider in an open-topped vessel wherein said cider has a dissolved gas content and water content, and wherein said cider has a head of foam over ice, said ice being formed from water of said water content. In said cider according to said fourteenth aspect of the invention, said head and ice may be produced at least in part by performance of said method according to the
10 thirteenth aspect.

According to a fifteenth aspect of the invention there is provided a method of sustaining a head on cider in an open-topped vessel wherein said cider comprises a water content and a dissolved gas content, said method comprising providing a head on the cider and forming ice in the cider from water of said water content, and in said vessel said ice forming a layer covered by said head. In said method according to the fifteenth aspect of the invention, said head and ice may be produced at least in part by performance of said method according to the thirteenth aspect.
20

The invention will now be further described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:-

Figure 1 is a diagrammatic view of apparatus for delivering cooled
25 draught beverage;

Figures 2 to 4 show diagrammatically in elevation a drinking vessel filled with draught beverage delivered by the apparatus in Figure 1 to illustrate successive changes or variations in the beverage after delivery
30 thereof into a drinking vessel;

Figure 5 to 7 respectively shows diagrammatic side elevations illustrating modifications in the way the delivered beverage may be served in the drinking vessel;

5

Figure 8 is a diagrammatic view showing in elevation a drinking vessel filled with a beverage delivered by the apparatus in Figure 1, the vessel being shown standing on apparatus represented diagrammatically to apply ultrasound signals to the beverage;

10

Figure 9 to 15 shows diagrammatically in elevation successive changes in the development or variations in a head on the beverage subsequent to the beverage being subjected to ultrasound signals and also to development or variation in ice formed in the beverage;

15

Figure 16 is a diagrammatic view of an alternative method of applying ultrasound signals to the beverage;

Figure 17 is a diagrammatic view of yet a further method of applying ultrasound signals to the beverage;

20 Figure 18 shows a pint of lager being excited by ultrasound;

Figure 19 shows the pint of lager in Figure 18 after it has been
25 allowed to stand for three minutes;

Figure 20 is a diagrammatic view of apparatus for delivering cooled draught cider;

Figure 21 is a diagrammatic view showing in elevation a drinking vessel filled with cider delivered by the apparatus in Figure 20, the vessel being shown standing on apparatus represented diagrammatically (and similar to that in Figure 8) to apply ultra-sound signals to the cider;

5

Figure 22 and 23 shows diagrammatically in elevation successive changes in the development of the variations in the head on the cider subsequent to the cider being subjected to ultra-sound signals and also to development of or variations in ice formed in the cider;

10

Figure 24 is a diagrammatic view of an alternative method of applying ultra-sound signals to the cider, and;

15 Figure 25 is a diagrammatic view of yet a further method of applying ultra-sound signals to the cider.

The draught beverage is stored in a keg or cask 4 which may be made of metal. The cask 4 can be stored in a cold-room known per se in public houses or clubs and/or, if desired, in a more specific cold or cooled enclosure 6, for example a tank contained a chilled mixture of water and ethylene glycol. As stated above the beverage has a water content and a dissolved gas content. This gas may be any suitable non-oxidising gas, for example carbon dioxide and/or nitrogen. The amount of gas dissolved in the beverage may be within the usual known range for beverages, and the pressure within the cask 4 and the remainder of the supply apparatus (described below) may also be within the usual known range for beverages supplied on draught.

30 The beverage may be a beer which term includes lager, ale, porter, or stout, or may be cider. The dissolved carbon dioxide content may be

greater than substantially 1 vols/vol or 2 vols/vol and may be substantially 2.2 volumes per volume, and/or the dissolved nitrogen content may be substantially 25 p.p.m. to 35 p.p.m. If desired the carbon dioxide content may be substantially 4 vols/vol or substantially 5 vols/vol. The alcohol content may be between 2.5% abv to 6 or 7% abv, preferably 4-5% abv, ± 5 1% abv.

The beverage may be a flavoured alcoholic beverage.

10 A pump 8, arranged to operate substantially only when the manually operable valve 10 is open, is provided to pump beverage from the cask 4 along a pipe 12 ultimately to the valve 10 and a dispense outlet 14 therefrom. In known manner, a blanket or atmosphere of non-oxidising/pressurised gas (for example carbon dioxide and/or nitrogen) is 15 provided in the cask 4 from a suitable supply 16 and assists the pump 8 in the extraction of the beverage.

20 A beverage dispense unit is indicated generally at 18 and has a cover indicated by interrupted lines 20. The dispense unit may be mounted at or in the vicinity of a drinks' bar - for example on the top of, or incorporated into, a counter of the bar.

25 In proximity to the cover 20 the pipe 12 divides into two flow paths 22 and 24, each leading to the valve 10. One is formed by piping 22a, 22b, 22c and passages 26 in heat exchangers 28a and 28b, and the other is formed by piping 24a, 24b, 24c and passages 26 in heat exchangers 28c and 28d.

30 A chiller unit 30 circulates coolant through passages 32 in the heat exchangers 28 in the series by a system comprising a coolant flow pipe 34

and a coolant return pipe 36. Beverage pipes 22a and 24a can be bundled together in known manner with the coolant pipes 34 and 36 to form a python 38. The heat exchangers 28 may be plate heat exchangers.

A circulation pump 40 which may operate continuously, extends 5 between the flow paths 22 and 24 adjacent to the junction between the pipe 12 and the flow paths. Thus, the flow paths 22, 24 and the pump 40 form a circulation loop 22, 24, 40 around which beverage is continuously circulated when valve 10 is closed.

10 As suggested in Figure 1, in the beverage dispense unit 18, the heat exchangers 28 are within the cover 20, whilst the valve 10 and outlet 14 can be on its exterior, and a portion of the circulation loop comprised by the pump 40 and sections of pipes 22a and 24a is also external of the cover and may be exposed to ambient temperature at the bar.

15 If desired, the pipe 12 may be incorporated in know manner into another cooling cooling python 42 comprising flow and return pipes 44 and 46, carrying coolant from and back to a chiller unit 48.

20 Overall, the beverage arrangement - and particularly that provided by the dispense unit 18 by the heat exchangers 28 - so cools the beverage that the beverage issuing from the outlet 14 when valve 10 is opened at a temperature below the freezing point of water at the ambient atmospheric pressure. For example the beverage may issue at a temperature in the range 25 of substantially -1°C to substantially -12°C into a drinking vessel or drinking glass. The range may be substantially -4°C to substantially -6°C. A target temperature of -5°C is aimed for if we use a beverage with about 4.5% abv.

When the valve 10 is closed, the beverage is circulated automatically around the loop 22, 24, 40 so it cannot stand still and start to freeze and block the supply path to valve 10.

5 In the case of draught beverages, for example beers, conventionally served with a head, the outlet 14 may include a known orifice plate, or other device, to promote foaming.

With reference to Figure 2, when a draught beverage 50 is delivered
10 from the outlet 14 (Figure 1) into a drinking vessel 52 (for example a glass) the beverage is exposed to ambient atmospheric pressure and ambient or room temperature, the beverage temperature starts to increase, for example to -3°C. Almost immediately, a slug of ice 54a forms near the top of the vessel 50 at the upper level of the beverage, the ice being caused (we believe) as a result of nucleation sites resulting from the forming of bubbles
15 of dissolved gas. If the beverage 50 has a head 56 of foam the ice forms just below the head. The or a greater part of the ice may be in the nature of slush and is formed from the water already forming the beverage. The slug of ice grows as indicated at 54b in Figure 3 and 54c in Figure 4 until it
20 may substantially occupy the vessel 52. The growth of ice (in, say, a pint glass) can be accomplished in a minute or two, is fascinating to watch and can give rise to interesting visual effects based on the growth of the ice and the bubbling off of the gas. Another interesting visual effect is that cooled
25 beverages delivered into a drinking vessel from the apparatus in Figure 1 swirl in the vessel for a longer time period than beverages which have not been cooled.

Not only does the formation of the ice give rise to interesting visual effects, but the existence of the ice helps to keep the drink cool longer.
30 Also, since the ice is formed from the water in the beverage, the beverage is

not diluted by the ice. In fact, for an alcoholic beverage, the overall amount of alcohol remains the same in the container when the ice forms, but since water is being used for the ice, the alcoholic strength of the remaining liquid beverages increases until the ice melts.

5

The vessel 52 may be shaped or formed to encourage formation of the ice. In Figure 5, a region 58 (having a rough surface) is provided to encourage formation of nucleation sites to promote formations of a further ice slug 54d which rises as indicated by arrow A to enlarge the ice slug 54
10 developing from the top of the vessel 52.

In Figure 6, formation of further ice 54e in the body of the beverage 50 is encouraged by the insertion therein of an elongate implement or rod 60 represented in Figure 6 by a swizzle-stick having formations 62 and 64 at its lower end and shank respectively which further encourage development of nucleation sites. In another instance, the rod 60 may be a thermometer body which can also be used to take the temperature of the drink to see if it has risen sufficiently high for it to be safe to drink. The implement can be used to push the ice around.
15

20

In Figure 7, coloured regions or streaks are shown in the ice 54 and beverage 50. These coloured formations are formed by the release of non-toxic, edible, colouring materials or dyes into the beverage 56. The colouring material or dye, which stands out visually from the ice and beverage, may be injected into the beverage, or may be introduced into the beverage by or on the aforesaid implement.
25

It is preferable for the vessel 52 to have a wall of sufficient transparency so that the formation of the ice slug 54 in the beverage 50 can
30 be observed and its changing nature visually appreciated.

The drinking vessel 52 can be formed of, or have external surface areas formed of, material (for example thermo-chromic material) which automatically changes colour with temperature change. Apart from this 5 being a further interesting visual effect, the attainment of one particular colour may signal that the beverage is at a suitable temperature for drinking.

Whilst any kind of beverage having a water and dissolved gas content may be used, we believe that lager demonstrates a visual nature or 10 character of the invention.

With reference to Figure 8, a draught beverage 70 (which may be a beer, for example a lager) is delivered from the outlet 14 (Figure 1) into a drinking vessel 72, for example a glass which is preferably rather tall and 15 preferably has a clear or transparent wall.

Preferably, the vessel 72 is chilled before it received the beverage. The vessel 72 may be chilled to a temperature of substantially 4°C or less. For example a known bottle chiller may be used to chill the vessel 72 to 20 substantially 4°C whilst a known glass froster may chill the vessel to substantially 0°C. A head of foam is shown at 74 and preferably this is some way below the top of the vessel 72 when the vessel contains a full measured volume, for example a pint of the beer.

25 Immediately after the cold beverage is poured into the chilled vessel 72 (or a few seconds after), the vessel is placed in a shallow depth of water 76 in a dish part 78 of an ultrasound generating apparatus 80 in which the dish 78 is securely mounted or affixed against a base part 82 containing an ultrasonic emitter 84. The emitter 84 may be arranged to emit ultrasound 30 signals in a frequency range of substantially 20kHz to 70kHz. For example

the beverage may be subject to ultrasound signals of a frequency of substantially 30 kHz or some other frequency selected from the aforesaid range, the water layer 76 providing an ultrasound for any desired period, though usually a short period of a few seconds, for example substantially 5 one to five seconds and more specifically about three or four seconds. The user may be able to vary the length of time that the ultrasound is applied, for example by having to hold down a switch, or by altering the setting on a control.

10 The result in a short time (perhaps a few seconds to the order of ten seconds) is shown in Figure 9 in which the exposure to ultra-sonic signals has promoted a fairly dense sudden formation of a mass of bubbles 86 of the dissolved gas throughout the liquid beverage. This causes the head 74 to increase in height. As shown in Figure 10, the head 74 may rise out of the 15 vessel 72. The gas bubbles form nucleation sites encouraging the quick formation of a mass of ice 88A just below the head. This ice 88A may be of a rather slushy character. For a period the mass of slush 88A grows and the head 74 rises as shown in Figure 11 but the bubbles of gas are no longer so numerous. Nevertheless, they can act as nucleation sites encouraging there 20 at the formation of ice 88B in the body of the beverage, this ice 88B may be more in the nature of flakes, for example snow type flakes, which rise and agglomerate to form a flaky mass 88C of ice on the underside of the slushy ice mass 88A. As indicated in Figure 12 and 13 the ice flakes continue to form for a period, rise and extend the ice mass 88C downwards through the 25 beverage 70.

Going from the stage shown in Figure 8 to that in Figure 14 may only take one or two minutes so the increase in gas bubbling and the formation and visible development of the ice takes place fairly quickly and can be 30 interesting and rather amazing phenomena to observe through the glass 72.

To enhance the theatre, drama or wonder of the event for a customer at the drinks' bar the operation of the apparatus 80 may be accompanied by an automatically (or manually actuated) occurring audible performance 5 which may be mechanically or electrically produced using sound apparatus giving out dramatic, musical or tuneful sounds. In addition to, or as an alternative, the operation of the apparatus 80 may be, possibly automatically, accompanied by a visual lights display, for example visible flashes of light. These may stimulate flashes of lightening. In that case the 10 audible performance may comprise noise resembling thunder.

If desired, the vessel 72 when subject to the ultrasound may be concealed from the view of the customer in a bar. For example, it may be concealed from view on one or more sides in an enclosure which may be on 15 the counter or proximate thereto, which enclosure may be represented as a "magic" or magician's box or cabinet.

Preferably, the beverage is a pale colour. For example the beverage may be a pale coloured beer, for example a lager.

20 Besides the ice forming in the beverage 70 being an intriguing sight, it helps show the customer the beverage is cold and that it has not been diluted by addition of ice from water other than that of the beverage.

25 The good head 74 provides insulation of the ice, particularly from overhead heat, which helps sustain the ice for longer and thus the duration of its cooling effect. Also the ice below the head 74, helps sustain the existence of the head which may last for ten minutes, fifteen minutes or most preferably for twenty minutes or so.

In Figure 15, the head 74 though starting to collapse (at its centre and move away from the vessel's wall) after the elapse of some time, for example fifteen or so minutes, is still stubbornly remaining, insulating the ice and giving the beverage an attractive presentation in the vessel 72.

5

An alternative method of applying the ultrasound signals is represented in Figure 16 in which after the apparatus 2 in Figure 1 has dispensed a vessel or glass 72 of beverage 70 an ultrasound probe 90 powered through cable 92 is dipped into the beverage for emitter 84A to 10 give out ultrasound signals. The probe 90 may be inserted into the beverage before the full measured amount is supplied to the vessel.

15 88B.

The ultrasound probe 14 in Figure 12 may emit ultrasound signals whilst beer is passing through it to the vessel 72, and/or may become partially immersed in the beverage as shown and emit ultrasound signals 20 into the beverage 70 in the vessel 72 whilst the measured volume of beverage is still being supplied or after it has been supplied.

Figure 18 shows another glass 172 (for example a pint) of beverage 170 in this case lager, being excited (as indicated by arrow X) at the base 25 only by an ultrasound emitter, for example by standing the glass of beverage in couplant (water) for example as shown in Figure 8. Figure 18 shows the glass 172 after it has been excited by the ultrasound for about three seconds or so, and whilst it is still being excited by ultrasound and whilst a head 174 of foam is beginning to form. As will be seen, in addition to general bubble formation at a relatively modest level throughout the volume of the 30

beverage 170, there is increased activity in a series of horizontal "white bands" about half-way up the height of the glass 172. Interspersed between the white bands 120 are bands 122 which are less white-coloured i.e. more beerage or lager coloured. There are typically two to four white bands 120 visible, but increased bubble formation may occur above and below the "banded region" 120, 122.

The formation of the bands 120, 122 gives the glass of beverage an attractive appearance for the few seconds that they last. It is believed that 10 they may be associated with the formation of standing waves in the glass 172 due to the ultrasound excitation, and may represent areas of the glass which might vibrate the most (although this belief is speculative and is not to be held to be limiting). The bands 120, 122 may form generally in the central height of the glass, but they may not be right at the middle - for 15 example, they could be one-third to two-fifths of the way down from the top (or up from the bottom).

It should also be noted that the glass 172 of Figure 18 has a mouth 124 that is narrower than a body portion 126. It is believed that having a 20 restricted mouth forms a deeper and longer-lasting head. This may, or may not be associated with the fact that in comparison with the volume of beer associated with the fact that in comparison with the volume of beer contained a glass with a restricted mouth has a smaller exposed surface area of head than if it were in a vessel with straight sides, or outwardly flared 25 sides.

Our trials indicate that best/better results can be achieved on pints of beverage than on half-pints of beverage. This may be associated with greater heat capacity of a pint of beverage in comparison with a half-pint of 30 beverage, and the less effect exposure to the environment has/the less rapid

the effect of the heat transfer to the local environment, when the ratio of volume of beverage; exposed surface is larger.

Figure 19, illustrates the pint of lager of Figure 18 after about three 5 minutes have expired (or looked at another way after about ten minutes have expired - there is little change in the appearance of the glass of lager between the three minutes and the ten minutes). The head 14 is somewhat deeper than might be expected, and slightly projects above the glass 172. There is a relatively thin layer of ice 188A (of the order of a half to a few 10 millimetres) extending under the head completely across the diameter of the glass 172 and there is a depending projection of flaky ice 188B extending down perhaps two to five centimetres into the cleared beer. The projection 188B may extend for at least three centimetres, five centimetres is not to be taken as necessarily an upper limit to its length. The projection 188B is 15 generally central, but may be off-axis in comparison with the central axis of the glass. It has a narrower tip than it does base (the base being the portion adjacent the head 174).

It will be appreciated that creating a beverage having such an ice 20 formation is in itself new and itself gives a visually differentiated product - which is desirable to consumers.

Moreover, creating the bands or stripes during ultrasonic excitation 25 of the glass of beverage also creates a visually distinct product, and a differentiated mode of provision of the product to the consumer.

With reference to Figure 20 apparatus to supply cider on draught is indicated at 202.

The draught cider is stored in a keg or cask 204. As stated above, the draught cider has a water content and a dissolved gas content.

This gas may be any suitable non-oxidising gas, for example carbon dioxide and/or nitrogen. The amount of gas dissolved in the cider may be 5 within the usual known range for ciders.

The dissolved carbon dioxide content may be substantially 1.8% by volume, and/or the dissolved nitrogen content may be substantially 18 parts 10 per million (p.p.m.).

A pump 206 is provided to pump cider from the cask 204 through a non-return valve 207 and along a pipe 208 in a chilled python known per se (not shown); the pipe comprising a heat exchange coil 210 in a remote 15 cooling system known per se. The pipe 208 leads to a chilling coil 212 in a bath 214 of a chiller 216, from which coil a pipe 208A leads to a manual valve 218 (known per se) of a dispense outlet or nozzle 220 which may be provided at or on a drinks' bar. Bath 214 contains an ethylene glycol and water cooling mixture 222, for example 50% glycol and 50% water. The 20 cooling mixture 222 is cooled by an evaporator 224 of a refrigeration unit 226 comprising a condenser 228, a refrigerant pump 230, and an expansion arrangement 232. A pump 234 circulates the cold mixture 222 through piping 236 forming another python 238 with the pipe 208A.

25 In known manner, a blanket or atmosphere of non-oxidising gas (for example carbon dioxide and/or nitrogen) from a suitable supply 240 (via a pressure regulator 242) provides a top pressure in the cask 204 and assists the pump 206 in the extraction of cider.

The top gas pressure in the cask 204 may be substantially 206.84kN/m² (30lbs/in²).

The pump 206 may develop a pressure in pipes 208, 208A of
5 substantially 517.12kN/m² to substantially 551.58 kN/m² valve (75 to 80
lbs/in²). Normally pump 206 is not operating, thus when the valve 218 is
opened the pump pressure stored in the pipes 208, 208A drops to below a
pre-determined desired value which is observed by pressure switch 244 of a
pump control (not shown) causing the pump 206 to operate to provide a
10 pump output pressure of substantially 75 to 80 lbs/in². The chiller 216 is
arranged to cool the cider passing through to the outlet nozzle 220 to a pre-
determined temperature in the range of substantially -1°C to substantially -
12°C, for example -6°C. The cider reaches the nozzle 220 at that pre-
determined temperature and issues therefrom into an open-topped vessel 46
15 (Figure 2) which may be a drinking vessel, for example a drinking glass. In
Figure 20 the cider issuing from the outlet opening of the outlet nozzle 220
passes through a sparkler 247 (known per se). Instead of or in addition to
said sparkler 247, a known orifice plate may be mounted in nozzle 220. But
if desired, neither an orifice plate nor a sparkler may be fitted.

20

When valve 218 is closed, the pressure switch 244 observes a build-
up in pressure in the pipes 208, 208A above a predetermined value and the
control switches off the pump 206.

With reference to Fig 21, the draught cider 248 is delivered from the
25 outlet 220 (Figure 20) into the drinking vessel 246, for example a glass
which is preferably rather tall and preferably has a clear or transparent wall.
Preferably the vessel 246 is chilled before it receives the cider. The vessel

246 may be chilled to a temperature of substantially 4°C or less. For example a known bottle chiller may be used to chill the vessel to substantially 4°C whilst a known glass froster may chill the vessel to substantially 0°C. A head of foam is shown at 250 when the vessel contains 5 a full measured volume, for example a pint, of the cider.

Immediately the cold cider 250 is poured into the chilled vessel 246, the vessel is placed in a shallow depth of water 252 in a dish part 254 of an ultra-sound generating apparatus 256 in which the dish 254 is securely mounted or affixed against a base part 258 containing an ultra-sound emitter 260. The emitter 260 may be arranged to emit ultra-sound signals in a frequency range of substantially 20kHz to 70kHz. For example the cider may be subject to ultra-sound signals of a frequency of substantially 30 kHz or some other frequency selected from the aforesaid range, the water layer 10 252 providing an ultra-sonic transmission path or coupling. The cider 250 may be subject to the ultra-sound for any desired period, though usually a short period of a few seconds, for example substantially one to five seconds 15 and more specifically about five seconds.

20 The result in a short time is shown in Figure 22 in which the exposure to ultra-sonic signals has promoted sudden formation of bubbles of dissolved gas throughout the liquid cider 248 some bubbles 252A may be relatively large whilst others 252B may be relatively small and may tend to collect linearly in wavy lines which may snake upwardly. Also the head 25 250 may rise to increase its height or depth. The gas bubbles form nucleation sites encouraging the quick formation of ice in the cider 250 from water of the water content of the cider. The ice rises. It may be of a slushy character and tends to agglomerate in the lower part of and below the head 250 to form a slushy mass of ice 262 such as indicated in Figure 23 in 30 the cider.

Going from the stage shown in Figure 21 to that in Figure 23 may only take one or two minutes so that the gas bubbling and the formation and visible development of the ice takes place fairly quickly and be interesting 5 phenomena to observe through the glass 246.

Besides the ice forming in the cider 248 being an intriguing sight, it helps show the customer the cider is cold and that it has not been diluted by addition of ice from water other than that already in the cider.

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One of the most interesting features is that the head 250 on the glass of cider may last for a considerable time, i.e. several times the duration of a head on cider arising from known methods. The head 250 may last for twenty minutes or so. Its longevity may be due to (i) the mass of ice 262 15 acting as a seal or barrier to gas attempting to leave the liquid cider body, and/or (ii) the fact that the ice 262 is keeping the head 250 cold.

An alternative method of applying the ultra-sound signals is represented in Figure 24, in which after the apparatus 202 in Figure 20 has 20 dispensed a vessel or glass 246 of cider 248 an ultra-sound probe 264 powered through cable 266 is dipped into the cider for emitter 260A to give out ultra-sound signals. The probe 264 may be inserted into the cider before the full measured amount is supplied to the vessel 246.

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In Figure 25, the dispense outlet 220 has been arranged to act as an ultra-sonic probe for example by providing it with an ultra-sonic emitter 260B. The ultra-sonic probe 220 in Figure 25 may emit ultra-sound signals whilst cider is padding through it to the vessel 246, and/or may become partially immersed in the cider as shown and emit ultra-sound signals into

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the cider 248 in the vessel 246 whilst the measured volume of cider is still being supplied or after it has been supplied.

CLAIMS

1. A beverage in an open topped vessel, said beverage comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content, and in said vessel the beverage has a head of foam over ice, said ice being formed in the beverage from water of said water content.
5
2. A method of keeping a beverage in an open-topped vessel cool said beverage comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content, and said method comprising forming ice in the beverage in the open-topped vessel having a cooling effect on the beverage, said ice being formed in the beverage from water of said water content.
10
3. A method of sustaining cooling ice in a beverage in an open-topped vessel, said beverage comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content, and wherein said ice is formed in the beverage from water of said water content, said method comprising providing a head of foam on the beverage such that in the vessel said ice is covered by the head which acts as heat insulation above the ice against heat directed towards the ice from above the head.
15
20
4. A method of sustaining a head on a beverage in an open-topped vessel, said beverage comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content said method comprising providing said head on the beverage and forming ice in the beverage from water of said water content, and in said vessel said ice having a cooling effect on the head from below an upper part of the head.
25

5. An open-topped vessel of a beverage, the beverage comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content and being able to form a head as the beverage is dispensed into the vessel, the vessel of beverage having a head overlying an ice formation made of many ice crystals, the ice formation having been produced by ice forming in the beverage as it was dispensed or after it was dispensed into the vessel.

6. A beverage as claimed in claim 1 or claim 5 or a method as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 4 in which the beverage has been subjected to the effect of ultrasound signals and the beverage is draught beverage delivered into a vessel.

7. A beverage as claimed in claim 5 or claim 6 or a method as claimed in Claim 6, in which immediately before the draught beverage is delivered into the vessel said beverage is cooled to a temperature below the freezing point of water at ambient atmospheric pressure.

8. A method of serving draught beverage in an open-topped vessel, said beverage comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content, and said method comprising cooling the beer to a temperature below the freezing point of water at ambient atmospheric pressure, and delivering the cooled beer into said vessel, said cooled beverage being subjected to the effect of ultrasound signals or to the effect of other ice and/or gas bubble nucleation means.

25 9. A beverage as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 7, or a method as claimed in claim 8, in which the ultrasound signals are applied externally of said vessel.

10. A beverage as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 9, or a method as claimed in claim 8 or 9, in which the ultrasound signals are applied internally of said vessel to the cooled beverage.

5 11. A beverage as claimed in claim 10 or a method as claimed in claim 10, in which an ultrasound signal emitter is disposed in the beverage in the vessel emitting ultrasound signals into the beverage in the vessel.

10 12. A beverage as claimed in any one of claims 9, 10, or 11 or a method as claimed in any one of claims 9, 10, or 11, in which a dispense outlet or nozzle from which beverage is delivered into said vessel is adapted to act as an ultra-sonic emitter to provide aforesaid ultrasound signals.

15 13. A beverage as claimed in claim 12 or a method as claimed in claim 12, in which aforesaid ultrasound signals are applied to aforesaid beverage flowing through the dispense outlet.

20 14. A beverage as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 13, or a method as claimed in any one of claims 6 to 13 in which the ultrasound signals have a frequency in the range of 20kHz to 70kHz.

15. A beverage or a method as claimed in claim 14, in which the ultrasound signals have a frequency of substantially 30kHz.

25 16. A beverage as claimed in any one of claims 1, 5, 6, 7, 9, to 15, or a method as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 4 or 8 to 14, in which a mass of said ice develops downwards in the beverage below the head.

17. A beverage as claimed in any one of claims 1, 5, 6, 7 or 9 to 16, or a method as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 4 or 8 to 16 in which the vessel is chilled before beverage is delivered thereinto.

5 18. A beverage or a method as claimed in claim 17, in which the vessel is chilled to a temperature of substantially 4°C, or the vessel is chilled to a temperature less than 4°C.

10 19. A beverage or a method as claimed in claim 17, in which the vessel is chilled to a temperature of substantially 0°C.

20. A beverage as claimed in claim 7 or in any one of claims 9 to 19 when appended to claim 7, or a method as claimed in claim 8 or in any one of claims 9 to 19 when appended to claim 8, in which the beverage is cooled 15 to a temperature between substantially -1°C and substantially -12°C.

21. A beverage or a method as claimed in claim 20, in which the beverage is cooled to a temperature between substantially -4°C and substantially -6°C.

20 22. A beverage as claimed in any one of claims 1, 5, 6, 7, or 9 to 21 or a method as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 4 or 8 to 21 , in which the vessel has a wall portion of sufficient transparency to allow the contents of the vessel to be visible through said wall portion.

25 23. A beverage or a method as claimed in claim 22, in which the vessel is a glass drinking vessel.

24. A beverage as claimed in any one of claims 1, 5, 6, 7 or 9 to 23, or a method as claimed in any one of Claims 2 to 4 or 8 to 23 in which the beverage has a pale beer colour.
- 5 25. A beverage as claimed in any one of claims 1, 5, 6, 7 or 9 to 24 or a method as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 4 or 8 to 24 in which aforesaid dissolved gas comprises carbon dioxide and/or comprises nitrogen.
- 10 26. A beverage or a method as claimed in claim 25, in which the dissolved nitrogen content in the beverage is in the range of substantially zero parts per million (p.p.m.) to substantially 100 parts p.p.m.
- 15 27. A beverage or a method as claimed in claim 25 or in claim 26, in which the dissolved carbon dioxide content is about zero % by volume or greater.
28. A beverage or a method as claimed in claim 27, in which the carbon dioxide is substantially 2.2% or substantially 4% or substantially 5% by volume.
- 20 29. A beverage as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 7 or in any one of claims 9 to 28 when appended to claim 6, or a method as claimed in claim 8, or in any one of claims 9 to 28 when appended to claim 8, in which the ultrasound signals are accompanied by a mechanically or electrically produced audible performance and/or a visible light display.
- 25 30. A beverage or a method as claimed in claim 29, in which the audible performance is a tuneful or musical sound.
- 30 31. A beverage or a method as claimed in claim 29 or claim 30, in which

the visible light display comprises visible flashes of light.

32. A beverage as claimed in claim 6 or claim 7, or in any one of claims 9 to 32 when appended to claim 6, or a method as claimed in claim 8, or in 5 any one of claims 9 to 31 when appended to claim 8, in which the beverage is subjected to ultrasound within an enclosure arranged to conceal the vessel from view from at least one side of said enclosure.

33. A beverage comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content 10 wherein prior to being drunk said beverage is cooled to a temperature below the freezing point of water at ambient atmospheric pressure and delivered in a container to be drunk exposed to ambient atmospheric pressure, and wherein in said container aforesaid gas bubbles out of the beverage and at least a portion of said water content becomes ice.

15 34. A beverage to be available on draught and comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content, wherein prior to being drunk the draught beverage is to issue, at a temperature below the freezing point of water at ambient atmospheric pressure, from an outlet into a container open 20 to ambient atmospheric pressure so that the aforesaid gas bubbles out of the beverage and at least a portion of said water content becomes ice.

35. A beverage as claimed in Claim 33 and in any one of Claims 5 to 7 or 9 to 32, or as claimed in Claim 34 and in any one of Claims 5 to 7 or 9 to 25 32, wherein said container is said open-topped vessel.

36. A beverage as claimed in claim 35 in which said vessel has at least a wall portion of sufficient transparency to allow the contents of the vessel to be visible through said wall portion.

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37. A beverage as claimed in claim 35 or claim 36 in which the vessel is made of glass.

38. A beverage as claimed in any one of claims 35 to 37, in which the
5 vessel has a shape or formation to promote formation of said ice.

39. A beverage as claimed in any one of claims 35 to 38, in which the vessel has an internal surface arranged to provide nucleation sites to promote formation of said ice.

10 40. A beverage as claimed in claim 39, in which said surface has at least a surface portion which is roughened.

41. A beverage as claimed in any one of claims 35 to 40, in which the
15 vessel has at least a wall portion arranged to change colour automatically with variations in temperature.

42. A beverage as claimed in claim 41, in which said wall portion comprises thermo-chromic material.

20 43. A beverage as claimed in any one claims 33 to 42 in which the formed ice includes therein one or more streaks or regions of one or more colours which contrasts(s) with the colour of the ice and/or beverage.

25 44. A method of serving a draught beverage which comprises a water content and a dissolved gas content, said method comprising issuing the draught beverage from an outlet into an open topped vessel, prior to said issuing, storing or handling the beverage in a manner which impedes loss of aforesaid dissolved gas from the beverage and cooling said beverage to a
30 temperature below the freezing point of water at said ambient atmospheric

pressure, and in said vessel aforesaid gas bubbles out of the beverage at least a portion of said water becomes ice.

45. A method of providing a visual display or effect within an open-topped vessel having at least a portion of wall of some transparency, said method comprising providing a draught beverage comprising a water content and a dissolved gas content, issuing the draught beverage from an outlet into a said vessel, prior to said issuing, storing or handling of the beverage which impedes loss of aforesaid dissolved gas from the beverage and cooling said beverage to a temperature below the freezing point of water at said ambient atmospheric pressure, a visual display or effect developing in the beverage in the vessel, said visual display or effect comprising aforesaid gas bubbling out of the beverage and formation of ice due to at least a portion of said water becoming ice.

15 46. A method as claimed in claim 44, in which the vessel has a wall portion of some transparency.

20 47. A method as claimed in any one of claims 44 to 46, in which the vessel comprises glass.

25 48. A method as claimed in any one of claims 44 to 47, in which formation of ice develops in the vessel so as to increase the amount and extent of the ice from substantially an upper level of the beverage downwards through the beverage.

49. A method as claimed in any one of claims 44 to 48, in which the vessel has at least a wall portion which changes colour automatically with variation in temperature.

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50. A method as claimed in claim 49, in which said wall portion comprises thermo-chromic material.

51. A method as claimed in any one of claims 44 to 49 in which the vessel has a shape or formation to encourage the forming of the ice.

52. A method as claimed in any one of claims 44 to 51, in which the vessel has one or more internal formations to encourage the forming of the ice.

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53. A method as claimed in claim 52, in which at least a portion of an internal wall of the vessel has a roughened texture.

54. A method as claimed in any one of claims 44 to 53, in which the vessel is adapted to encourage formation of further ice in the beverage below an upper layer of forming ice, and said further ice rising to joint said upper layer.

55. A method as claimed in any one of claims 44 to 54, in which an implement is inserted into the beverage in the vessel to encourage formation of said ice.

56. A method as claimed in claim 55, in which said implement is a thermometer.

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57. A method as claimed in claim 56, in which said implement is a swizzle-stick.

58. A method as claimed in any one of claims 44 to 57, in which colouring material or dye is provided to form at least one coloured streak or

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66. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 61 to 65, comprising a unit or dispenser mountable on a counter of a drinks' bar and comprising the heat exchange means and the outlet.
- 5 67. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 61 to 66 in which a beverage flow path connects a reservoir of said draught beverage to said heat exchange means.
- 10 68. Apparatus as claimed in claim 67, in which said flow path comprises at least a portion of said loop.
69. Apparatus as claimed in claim 67, in which said flow path divides into a plurality of beverage routes, and said loop comprises one or more of said routes.
- 15 70. Apparatus as claimed in claim 67, in which intermediate said reservoir and said first-mentioned beverage cooling heat exchange means, the beverage is subject to the effect of second beverage cooling heat exchange means.
- 20 71. Apparatus as claimed in claim 67 in which the reservoir is subjected to cooling.
72. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 61 to 67, in which said 25 heat exchange means is first heat exchange means and second beverage cooling heat exchange means is provided to act on at least a portion of said loop.
73. Apparatus as claimed in claim 72, in which coolant common to the 30 first and second heat exchange means circulates therethrough.

74. Apparatus as claimed in claim 67, in which intermediate said reservoir and said loop the beverage is subject to the effect of further beverage cooling heat exchange means.

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75. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 61 to 74 in which the apparatus is arranged to operate so that the beverage which emerges from said outlet is at a temperature below the freezing point of water at the ambient atmospheric pressure.

10

76. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 61 to 74, in which the apparatus is arranged to operate so that the beverage which emerges from said outlet is at a temperature of between substantially -1°C and substantially -12°C.

15

77. A beverage as claimed in any one of Claims 1, 5 to 7, 9 to 43 or 60, or a method as claimed in any one of Claims 2 to 4, 8, 9 to 32 or 44 to 60, or an apparatus to supply a beverage as claimed in any one of Claims 61 to 76, in which the beverage is non-alcoholic.

20

78. A beverage as claimed in any one of Claims 1, 5 to 7, 9 to 43 or 60, or a method as claimed in any one of Claim 2 to 4, 8, 9 to 32 or 44 to 60 or an apparatus to supply a beverage as claimed in any one of Claims 61 to 76 in which the beverage is an alcoholic beverage.

25

79. A beverage, a method or an apparatus as claimed in Claim 78 in which said alcoholic beverage is a beer.

80. A beverage, a method or an apparatus as claimed in Claim 76 or
30 Claim 77, in which said beer is a lager.

81. A beverage, a method or an apparatus as claimed in Claim 76, in which said alcoholic beverage is a cider.
- 5 82. A method of serving draught cider in an open-topped vessel and wherein said cider comprises a water content and a dissolved gas content, said method comprising cooling the cider to a temperature below the freezing point of water at ambient atmospheric pressure, and delivering the cooled cider into said vessel, said cooled cider being subjected to the effect
10 of ultra-sound signals.
83. A method as claimed in Claim 82, in which the cider is cooled to a temperature in the range of substantially -1°C to substantially -12°C.
- 15 84. A method as claimed in Claim 83, in which the cider is cooled to a temperature of substantially -6°C.
85. A method as claimed in any one of Claims 82 to 84, in which the cooled cider issues from a dispense outlet through a sparkler.
- 20 86. A method as claimed in any one of Claims 82 to 84, in which the cooled cider passes through an orifice plate in a dispense outlet from which the cider issues.
- 25 87. A method as claimed in any one of Claims 82 to 86, in which the open-topped vessel is chilled before receiving the cider.
88. A method as claimed in Claim 87, in which the open-topped vessel is chilled to substantially 4°C or chilled to a temperature lower than 4°C.

89. A method as claimed in Claim 88, in which the open-topped vessel is chilled to substantially 0°C.

90. A method as claimed in any one of Claims 82 to 89, in which said 5 ultra-sound signals have a frequency in the range of substantially 20kHz to substantially 70 kHz.

91. A method as claimed in Claim 90, in which the ultra-sound signals have a frequency of substantially 30kHz.

10 92. A method as claimed in any one of Claims 82 to 91, in which the ultra-sound signals are applied externally of said vessel to said vessel.

93. A method as claimed in any one of Claims 82 to 91, in which the 15 ultra-sound signals are applied internally of said vessel to the cooled cider.

94. A method as claimed in Claim 93 in which an ultra-sonic signals emitter is disposed in the cider in the vessel for emitting ultra-sound signals into the cider in the vessel.

20 95. A method as claimed in Claim 93 or 94, in which a or the dispense outlet from which the cooled cider issues into said vessel is adapted to act as an ultra-sonic signal emitter to produce aforesaid ultra-sound signals.

25 96. A method as claimed in Claim 95, in which aforesaid ultra-sound signals are applied to aforesaid cider flowing through the dispense outlet.

97. A method as claimed in any one of Claims 82 to 96, in which the dissolved gas content comprises carbon dioxide and/or nitrogen.

98. A method as claimed in Claim 97, in which the carbon dioxide content is substantially zero % by volume or greater and/or the nitrogen content is substantially zero parts per million (p.p.m.) or greater.

99. Cider in an open-topped vessel wherein said cider comprises a dissolved gas content and a water content, and wherein said cider has a head of foam over ice, said ice being formed in the cider from water of said water content.

100. Cider as claimed in Claim 99, in which said head and ice are produced at least in part by performance of a method as claimed in any one of claims 82 to 98.

101. A method of sustaining a head on cider in an open-topped vessel, wherein said cider comprises a dissolved gas content and a water content, said method comprising providing a head on the cider and forming ice in the cider from water of said water content, and in said vessel said ice forming a layer covered by said head.

102. A method as claimed in Claim 101, in which said head and ice are produced at least in part by performance of a method as claimed in any one of Claims 82 to 98.

103. A beverage as claimed in Claim 1 and substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to Figures 1 to 19 or Figures 20 to 25 of the accompanying drawings.

104. A method of keeping a beverage in an open-topped vessel cool, substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to Figures 2 to 4, or Figures 2 to 5, or Figures 2 to 4 and 6, or Figures 2 to 4 and 7, or Figures 1 to 4, or Figures 1 to 5, or Figures 1, 2 to 4 and 6, or Figures 1, 2 to 4 and 7,

or Figures 8 to 15, or Figures 8 to 16, or Figures 8 to 15 and 17, or Figures 1, and 8 to 15, or Figures 1 and 8 to 16, or Figures 1 and 8 to 15 and 17, or Figures 18 and 19, or Figures 21 to 23, or Figures 22 to 24 or Figures 22, 23 and 24, or Figures 20 to 23, or Figures 20 and 22 to 24, or Figures 20 and 5 22, 23 and 25 of the accompanying drawings.

105 A method of sustaining cooling ice in a beverage in an open-topped vessel and wherein said ice is formed in the beverage from water of a water content of the beverage, said method being substantially as hereinbefore 10 described with reference to Figures 2 to 4, or Figures 2 to 5, or Figures 2 to 4 and 6, or Figures 2 to 4 and 7, or Figures 1 to 4, or Figures 1 to 5, or Figures 1, 2 to 4 and 6, or Figures 1, 2 to 4 and 7, or Figures 8 to 15, or Figures 8 to 16, or Figures 8 to 15 and 17, or Figures 1, and 8 to 15, or Figures 1 and 8 to 16, or Figures 1 and 8 to 15 and 17, or Figures 18 and 19, 15 or Figures 21 to 23, or Figures 22 to 24, or Figures 22, 23 and 24, or Figures 20 to 23, or Figures 20 and 22 to 24, or Figures 20 and 22, 23 and 25 accompanying drawings.

106. A method of sustaining a head on a beverage in an open-topped 20 vessel, substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to Figures 2 to 4, or Figures 2 to 5, or Figures 2 to 4 and 6, or Figures 2 to 4 and 7, or Figures 1 to 4, or Figures 1 to 5, or Figures 1, 2 to 4 and 6, or Figures 1, 2 to 4 and 7, or Figures 8 to 15, or Figures 8 to 16, or Figures 8 to 15 and 17, or Figures 1, and 8 to 15, or Figures 1 and 8 to 16, or Figures 1 and 8 to 15 25 and 17, or Figures 18 and 19, or Figures 21 to 23, or Figures 22 to 24, or Figures 22, 23 and 24, or Figures 20 to 23, or Figures 20 and 22 to 24, or Figures 20 and 22, 23 and 25 accompanying drawings.

107. A method of serving draught beverage in an open-topped vessel, 30 substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to Figures 2 to 4, or

Figures 2 to 5, or Figures 2 to 4 and 6, or Figures 2 to 4 and 7, or Figures 1 to 4, or Figures 1 to 5, or Figures 1, 2 to 4 and 6, or Figures 1, 2 to 4 and 7, or Figures 8 to 15, or Figures 8 to 16, or Figures 8 to 15 and 17, or Figures 1, and 8 to 15, or Figures 1 and 8 to 16, or Figures 1 and 8 to 15 and 17, or 5 Figures 18 and 19, or Figures 21 to 23, or Figures 22 to 24, or Figures 22, 23 and 24, or Figures 20 to 23, or Figures 20 and 22 to 24, or Figures 20 and 22, 23 and 25.

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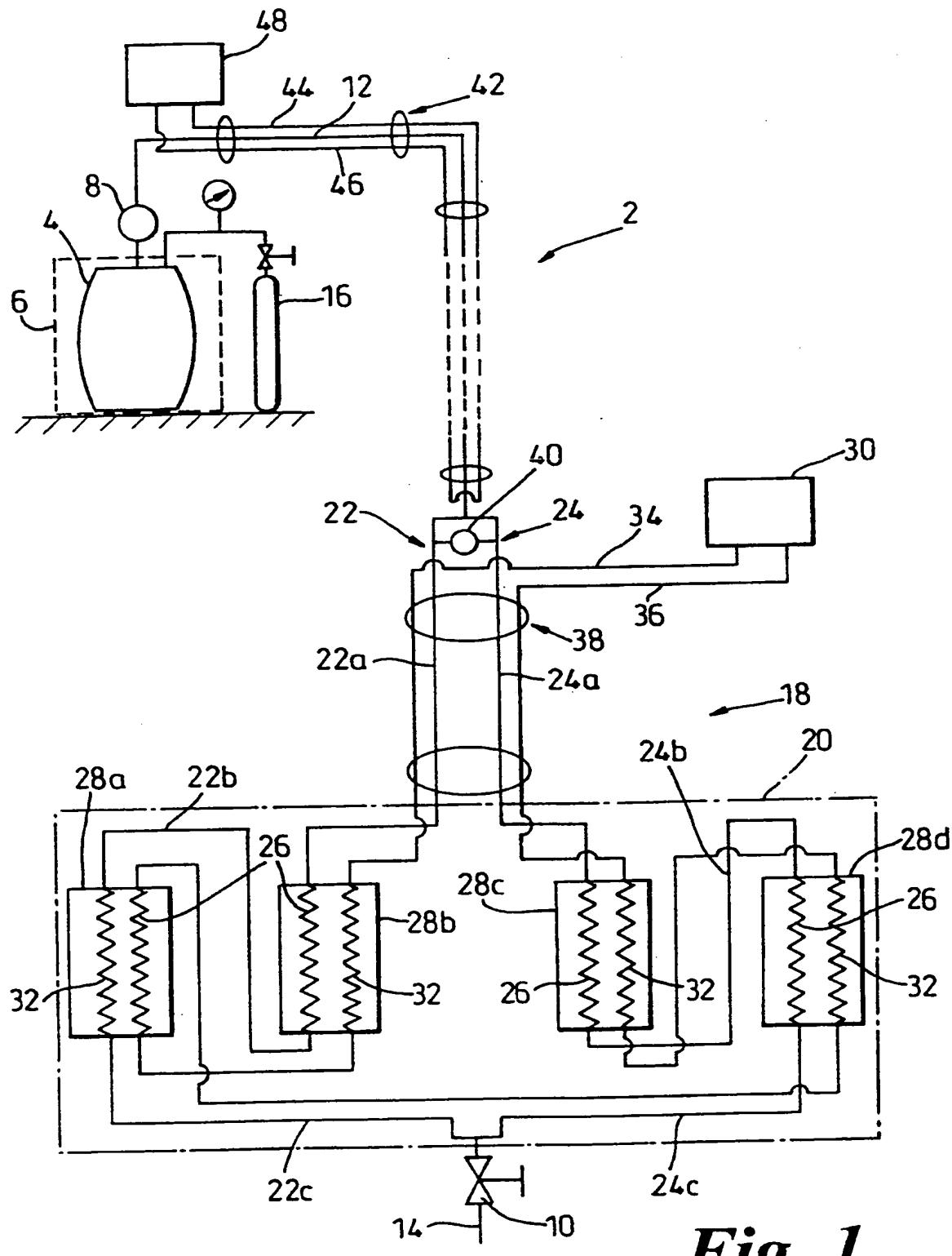


Fig. 1

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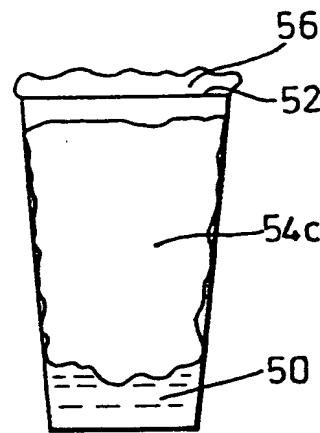
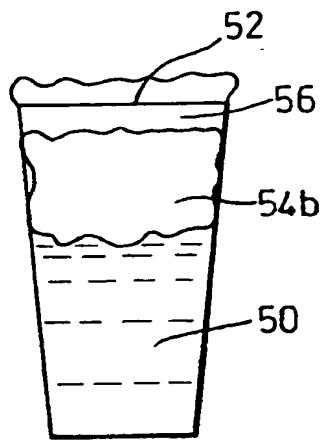
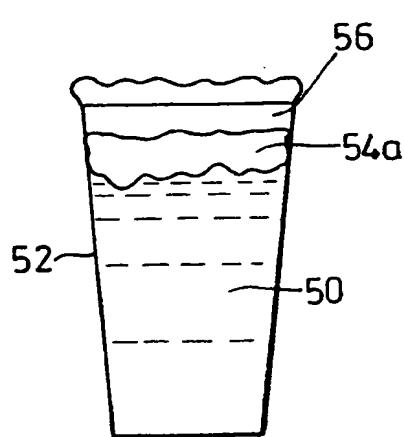


Fig. 2

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

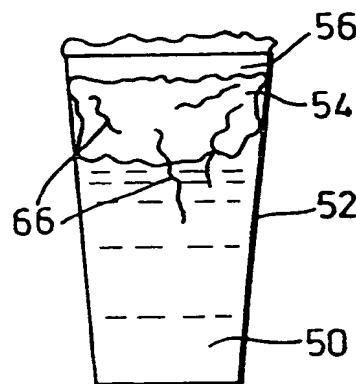
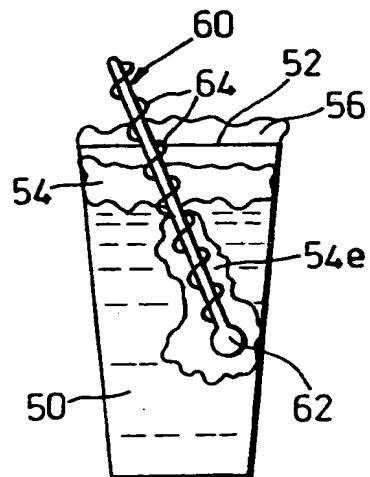
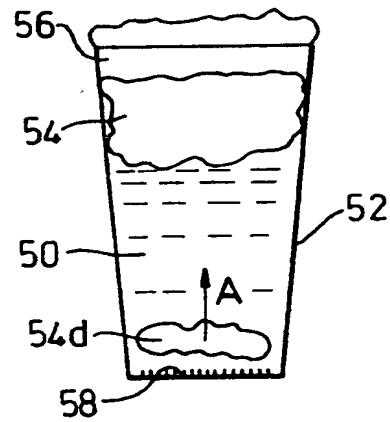


Fig. 5

Fig. 6

Fig. 7

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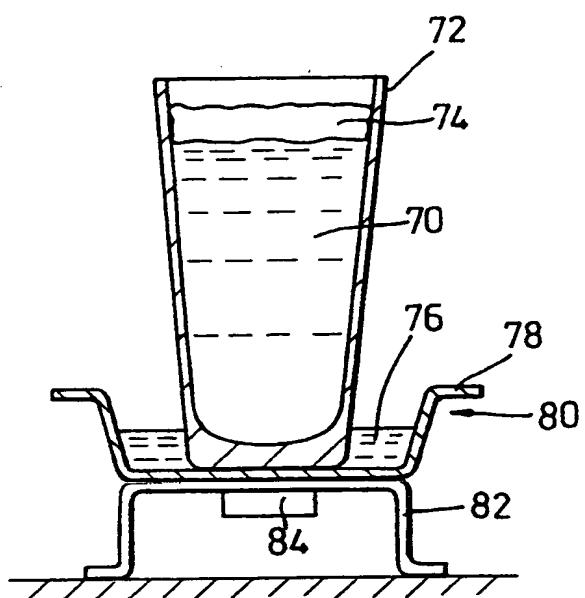


Fig. 8

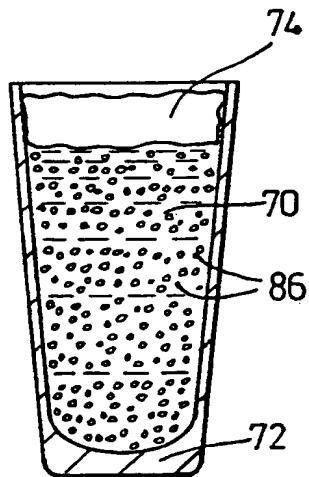


Fig. 9

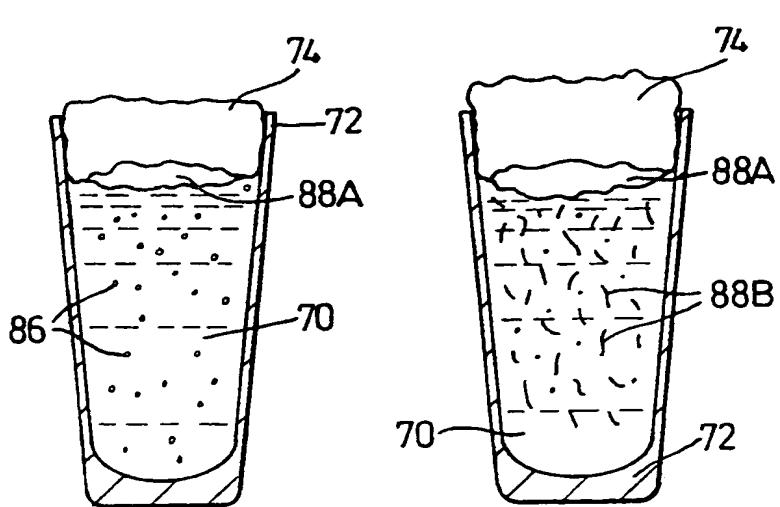


Fig. 10

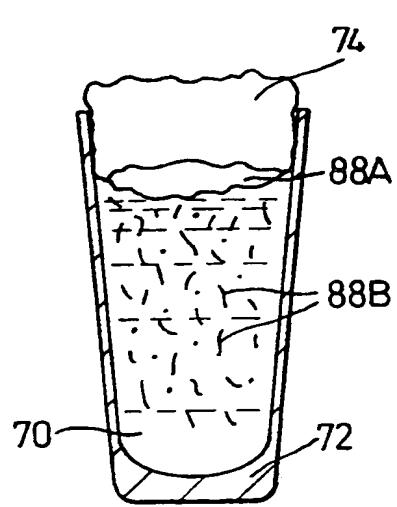


Fig. 11

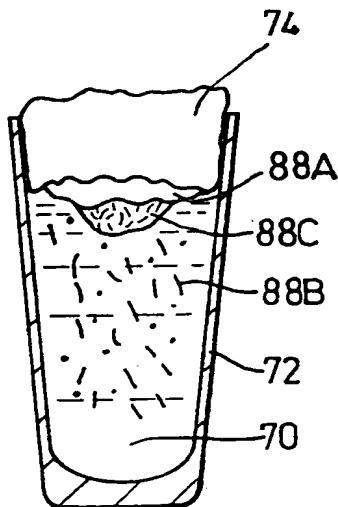


Fig. 12

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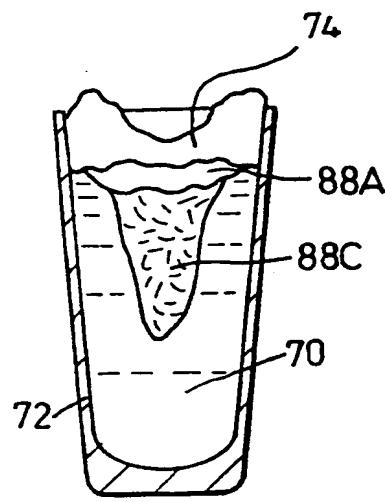
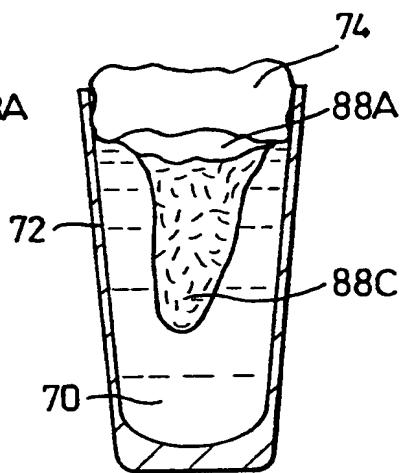
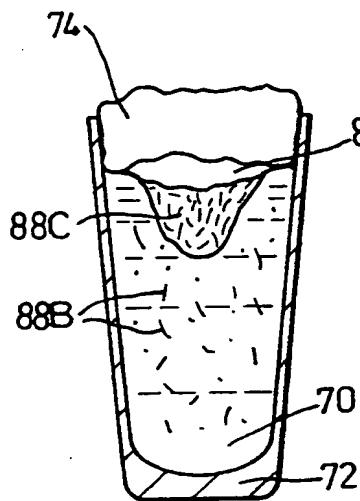


Fig. 13

Fig. 14

Fig. 15

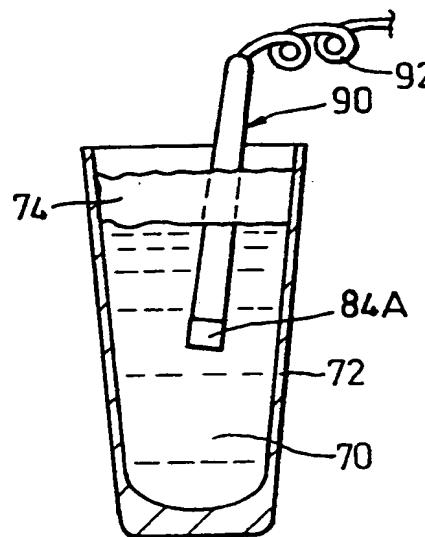


Fig. 16

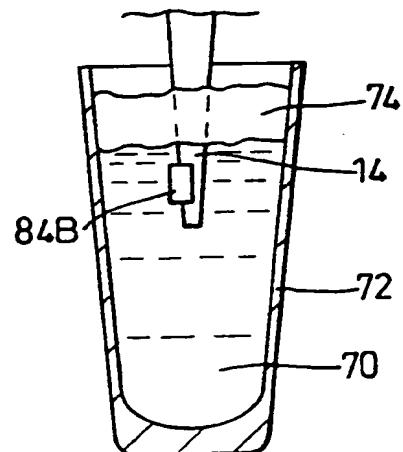
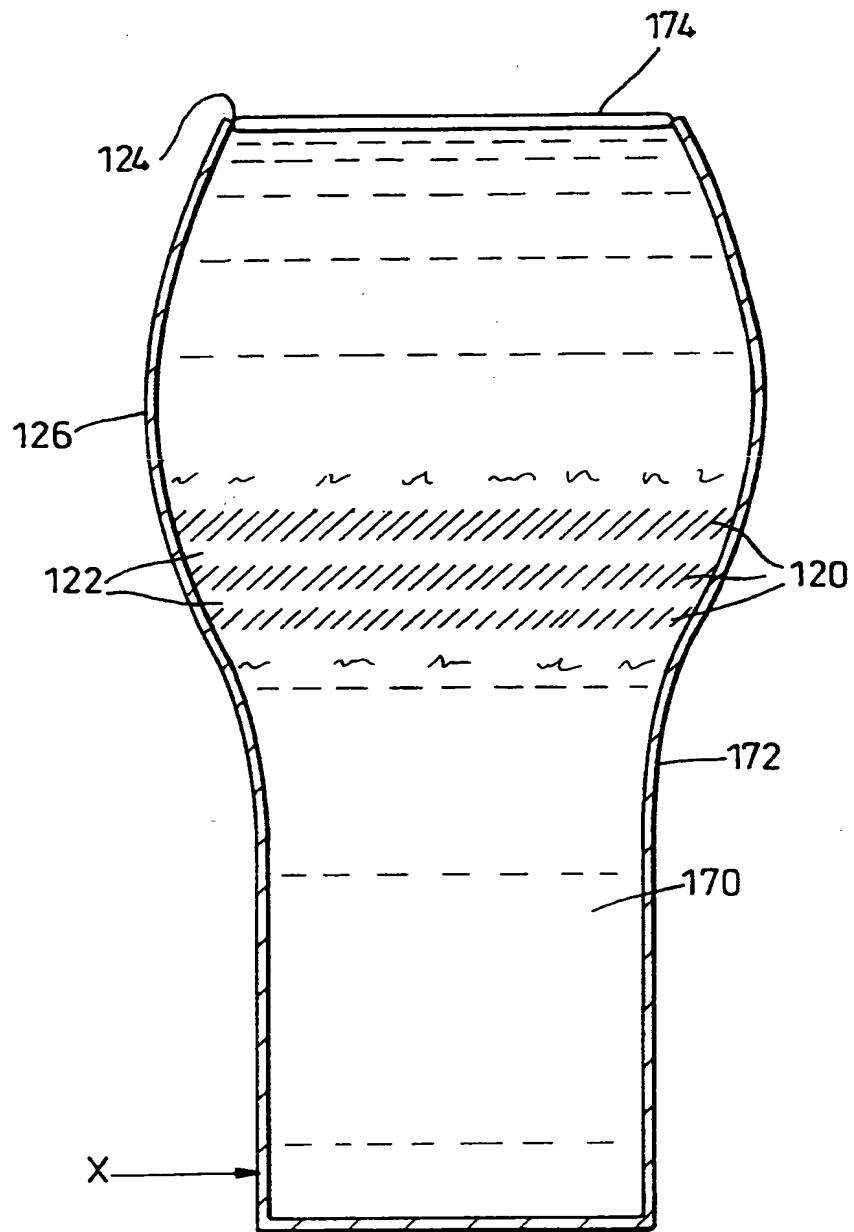


Fig. 17

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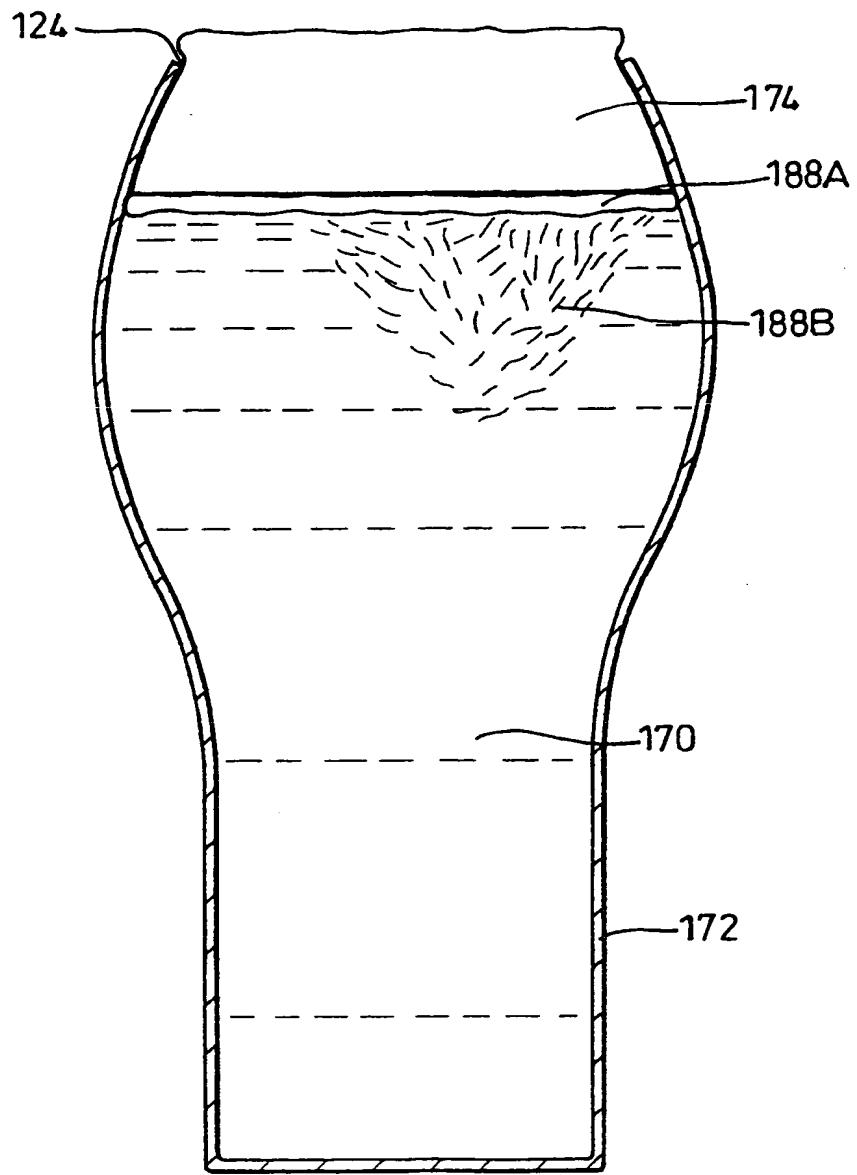


Fig. 19

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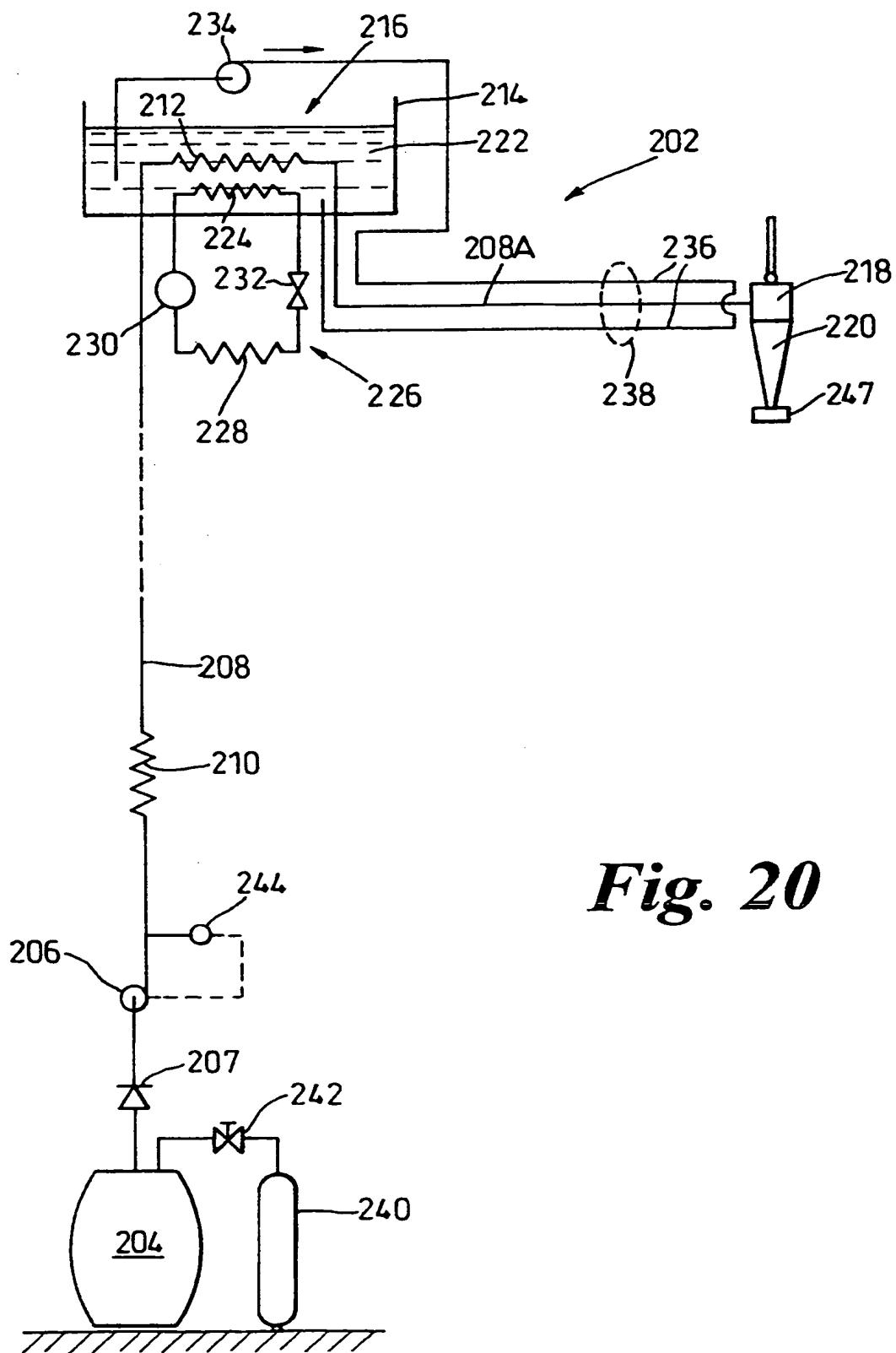
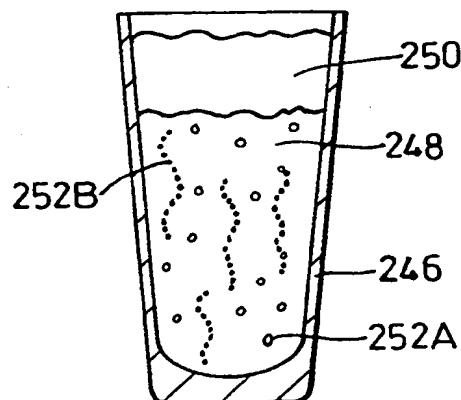
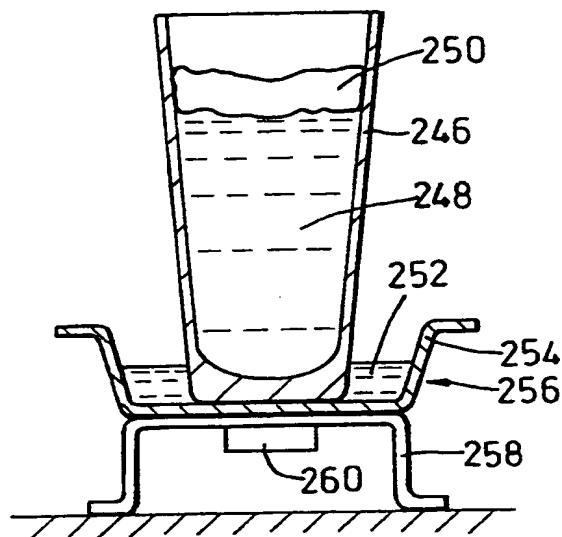
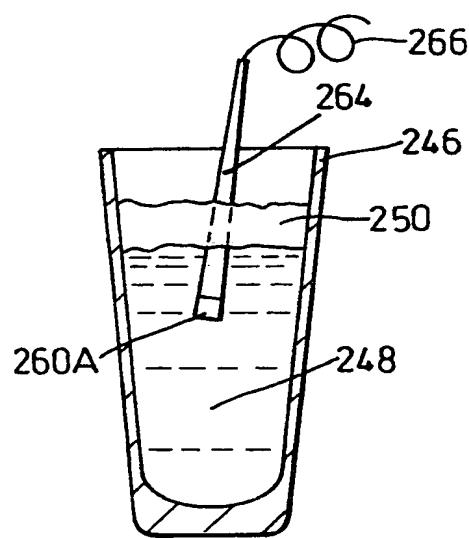
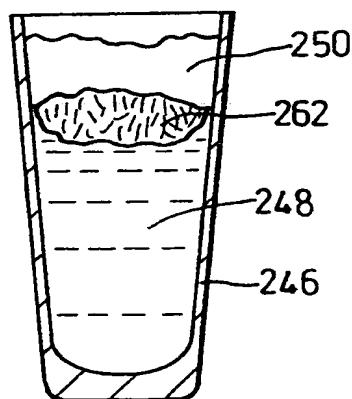
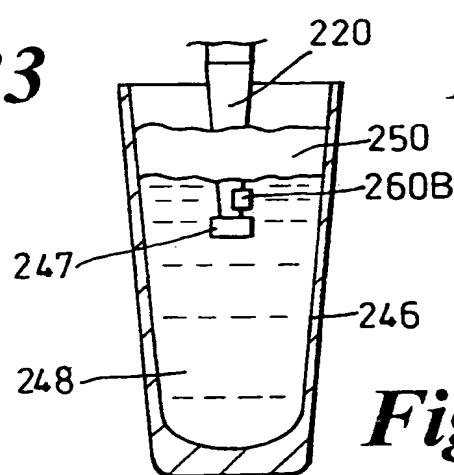


Fig. 20

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**Fig. 22****Fig. 21****Fig. 23****Fig. 24****Fig. 25**

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/GB 99/01551

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 6 C12H1/18 B67D1/04

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 6 C12H B67D C12G

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

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| X | DATABASE WPI Section Ch, Derwent Publications Ltd., London, GB; Class D13, AN 1971-19784S XP002119502 & JP 46 010033 B (MORINAGA MILK IND'S CO LTD) abstract --- | 2,33 -/- |

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Date of mailing of the international search report

20 October 1999

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Information on patent family members

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